

# SIERRA CLUB BULLETIN

September

1954

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Steve Miller

Trouble with Dams and Trams

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# People You Know

We've all had a busy summer. Even those who succeeded in getting away from it all, for a time, had their hands full beating off mosquitos, harvesting the limit of ten or 15 trout per day, loading and unloading film, signing peak registers, or perhaps just keeping the home fires burning.

Now we'll return to keeping busy in other, more customary ways. There's no business like Sierra Club business, and no time like the present for listing the chairmen of the various committees that carry on the main work of the club. (Officers and directors are named each month in the box on this page.)

These are the club committee chairmen:

*Cicely M. Christy*, Committee on Committees.

*James Mulholland*, Clair Tappaan Lodge.

*John R. Barnard*, Conservation and Conservation Administration.

*August Frugé*, Editorial.

*Oliver Kehrlein*, Education through Television.

*Arthur H. Blake*, Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs. *Charlotte E. Mauk*, delegate.

**THE SIERRA CLUB**,\* founded in 1892, has devoted itself to the study and protection of national scenic resources, particularly those of mountain regions. Participation is invited in the program to enjoy and preserve wilderness, wildlife, forests, and streams.

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Charlotte E. Mauk . . . . .	Blanche Stallings
Dan L. Thrapp . . . . .	

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\*Reg. U.S. Pat. Off.

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*Robert L. Lipman*, Insurance and Legal.  
*Clifford V. Heimbucher*, Investment and Accounting.

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*Charlotte E. Mauk*, Visual Education.  
*Harold C. Bryant*, Wilderness Conference.  
*Harold C. Bradley*, vice-chairman.  
*John A. Linford*, Winter Sports.

Chairmen have not yet been appointed for several committees. These are: Art; Muir Memorial; Nominating; Special Events, and Wildlife Administration and Pest Control.

To make our list of busy people more nearly complete (there are hundreds of others who see to it that the wheels go round), here are the chairmen of the club's ten chapters:

*Robert B. Bear*, Angeles.  
*Richard N. Burnley*, Atlantic.  
*Tony Reina*, Kern-Kaweah.  
*Warren M. Lemmon*, Loma Prieta.  
*Kathleen Jackson*, Los Padres.  
*Eugene F. Serr, Jr.*, Mother Lode.  
*Charles Marshall*, Riverside.  
*Lucius Johnson*, San Diego.  
*Robert P. Howell*, San Francisco Bay.  
*Robert R. Board*, Tehipte.

The next meeting of the Board of Directors of the Sierra Club will be held in Los Angeles on Saturday, October 16. Interested members are welcome to attend.

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# Sierra Club Bulletin

VOLUME 39

SEPTEMBER, 1954

NUMBER 7

... TO EXPLORE, ENJOY, AND PROTECT THE NATURAL MOUNTAIN SCENE ...

## For the September Record

### State Park Survey

The queues are forming at Sacramento for handouts from California's oil tidelands royalties, a large part of which has been reserved in the past for state park purposes. Friends of the state park system will have to be well informed to defend use of this income for land acquisition and park development.

For this reason, among others, the Conservation Committee of the Sierra Club has been conducting a survey of present and potential state park areas. If you have suggestions or information to offer, you are urged to write without delay to the Conservation Committee at the club office. (See "State Park Survey," *SCB*, April 1954.)

### Talk about Mountains

A big part of our job, as individuals and as an organization, is to keep a balanced view of wilderness values and experience before the public. The Sierra Club has always done that superbly by way of the printed word. New methods of communication offer new opportunities, and we are just becoming aware of what we may do with them. For one example, see "TV Challenge" in the March 1954 issue of the *SCB*, which reported on the club's experiment in providing color slides, stills and movie film for Dr. Tom Groody's program on Station KRON-TV, San Francisco.

Another trial effort, in which Sierrans have been happy to cooperate, is Stanley Gould's tape-recorded discussions on Sta-

tion KPFA, FM Channel 231, Berkeley. Mr. Gould, who began the series early this summer, plans to touch on many facets of Sierra Nevada mountaineering, history and adventure. The discussions last 30 minutes or more, and sometimes include three or four participants.

Recently the program went far enough afield to explore the club's position on the proposed Echo Park dam. Taking part were Richard M. Leonard, David R. Brower, and Charlotte Mauk. In a more typical half-hour presentation, Mr. Gould interviewed David R. Brower and Hervey Voge on the subject of their 1934 expedition during which they climbed 60 peaks, with the aid of the newly imported belaying technique.

### Operation Litterbug

"Wake up!" says a new leaflet published by the Angeles Chapter. "This is YOUR STATE—your land that is strewn with garbage and tin cans. That dirty camp, that cluttered view-point, that debris-strewn roadside—these are yours. Are you proud of them? It is too late to complain—get in and CLEAN them up. THEN PROTECT THEM."

The leaflet, headlined "Operation Litterbug," is a handy, concise outline of what individuals and groups can do to fight the battle for clean camps, trails and roadsides. *Southern Sierran* credits Ruth Simpson as the author, and says free copies are available. For information write the Angeles Chapter, Sierra Club, 427 West 5th Street, Los Angeles 13.

# Trouble with Dams and Trams

## Echo Park — Saved?

After seven months of vigorous controversy, we can relax temporarily. Congress has adjourned—gone home to seek our votes—without having passed the Upper Colorado Storage Project bill which would have authorized Echo Park dam in Dinosaur National Monument.

The May *Bulletin* gave a chronology of events up to May 18 when the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs voted 13 to 12 to approve the project, including a dam at Echo Park.

After committee approval, the bill could have been placed on the consent calendar in the House for immediate vote or referred to the House Rules Committee for a "rule" which would allow it to be debated and finally voted on by the full House. Since the consent calendar method requires unanimous approval for passage, the proponents of the bill referred it to the Rules Committee hoping that pressure properly applied during debate might give them victory on the final vote. They underestimated the conservation conscience of the Rules Committee, because it steadfastly refused to act in the matter.

The next plan of attack was in the Senate where, on relatively short notice, the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs held hearings on the project and approved it 13 to 1, with only California's Senator Thomas H. Kuchel voting against it. Senator Kuchel, in his minority report, stated, "I cannot overlook the fact that conservationists and

related groups, all of high repute, voiced grave fears that authorization of Echo Park Dam would constitute an implied abandonment of the policy of setting aside for future generations portions of our country which are felt to have unusual recreational, educational and inspirational values."

Approval of the Upper Colorado Storage Project bill by the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs did not come until July 24, even though the hearing began on June 28 and ended July 3.

After committee approval, there were constant rumors that the Senate would vote on the measure shortly. An attempt was made to tie the whole Upper Colorado Project bill as a rider on the Omnibus Flood Control bill in order to by-pass the House Rules Committee. Then, a few days before the session ended, the Upper Colorado bill was debated briefly on the floor of the Senate but no action was taken.

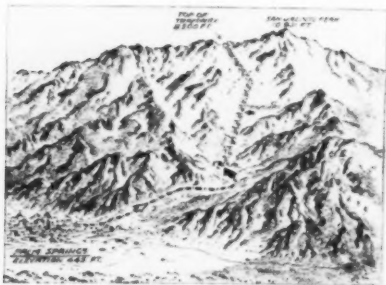
It is hard to say just which pressures prevented a vote on the bill by the whole Senate prior to adjournment. The rush of last-minute business was a factor, the Atomic Energy bill filibuster helped, perhaps the threat of an Echo Park filibuster delayed action. In any event, conservationists won the round.

Unless the 83rd Congress should reconvene prior to December 31, 1954, all Echo Park dam bills are now dead. After the first of the year, a new Congress, the 84th, will have to consider the Upper Colorado Project anew—this time, we hope, without an Echo Park dam. J.R.B.

## San Jacinto Tramway

Backers of the San Jacinto Tramway believe that the last obstacle to construction of their tram has been removed now that all rights of way have been acquired.

When the Mt. San Jacinto Winter Park Authority was set up by the California State Legislature many years ago, it was empowered to sell bonds to finance an aerial tramway from Chino Canyon (northwest of Palm Springs) to the San Jacinto State Park on



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## MOUNT RAINIER

*What price convenience?*

the upper flank of 10,831-foot Mt. San Jacinto in the San Bernardino range. The right to route the tramway across the now famous south half of Section 12 proved to be a tremendous stumbling block. The Authority discovered that it was a part of the San Jacinto Primitive Area under jurisdiction of the U.S. Forest Service, and according to regulations not subject to invasion by roads or a tramway.

After much negotiation, the Winter Park Authority finally worked out an agreement with the Forest Service which would allow the State of California to acquire the south half of Section 12 in exchange for lands of equal value. Final approval of this exchange has now been made and the transfer of lands effected.

Earl Coffman of Palm Springs, president of the Winter Park Authority, has stated that a new economic survey will be made prior to issuance of revenue bonds for financing construction. He estimated that the tramway would cost between \$8,000,000 and \$10,000,000 and take two years to construct.

There still may be ways to block this tramway, which threatens the wilderness quality of a unique mountain preserve, but a significant step towards construction was taken when the last stretch of right-of-way was gained by the land exchange.

### 'Modernizing' Rainier

For nearly a year a small but highly vocal group in the state of Washington has been agitating for a ski lift or tramway up the side of Mount Rainier. The lower terminus

"WE MUST RECOGNIZE that our civilization is such that no lands will persist unexploited unless they are deliberately set aside and protected. For this policy to prevail we must be faithful in respecting our dedications, for otherwise the dedicated areas will inevitably disappear one by one as it seems profitable to exploit them. To merely set



of the tram would be at Paradise and the upper at Panorama Point or Camp Muir. The plan also calls for extensive new lodges and other facilities at Paradise.

The National Park Service up to this point has taken the attitude that reasonable development at Paradise would be desirable. The Service is willing to keep the road open to Paradise, provided funds are available and public safety is assured. Ski tows would be permitted provided they are of the type (rope or T-bar) that can be removed in summer and therefore do not impair scenic values on the mountain. The Park Service agrees that improved lodge facilities are necessary.

*(Concluded on page 6)*

aside an area until we get to it with some kind of exploitation project is a policy that defrauds both our own and future generations."

—Representative George P. Miller of Alameda, California, in Appendix to Congressional Record, July 23, 1954.

## 'Modernizing' Rainier

The Washington group, which includes the Automobile Club of Washington and some members of Governor Arthur B. Langlie's Rainier National Park Development Study Committee, doesn't want to settle for anything but full-scale development. Pressure has been applied so vigorously that the National Park Service is holding a series of meetings in the Northwest to determine whether public opinion favors "modernizing the mountain".

We believe that a permanent tramway on Mount Rainier, operating the year around, and extensive development (swimming pool, tennis courts, spacious green lawns) at Paradise would be a violation of the national park principles laid down by Congress in 1916, which provide that the use of national parks shall be regulated to conform to the fundamental purpose of such parks, which is to preserve the scenery and to provide for its enjoyment in such manner and by such means as will leave it unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

## Books from the Conservation Foundation

Notable among the recent books on various aspects of conservation are those published by the Conservation Foundation, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization headquartered in New York, and guided by Fairfield Osborn, its president. The objects and purposes of the corporation are "to promote conservation of the earth's life-supporting resources—animal life, forests and other plant life, water sources and productive soils—and to advance, improve and encourage knowledge and understanding of such resources, their natural distribution and wise use and their essential relationship to each other and to the sustenance and enrichment of all life."

At the end of last year, part of the Foundation's initial research program—the publication of the results of most of the studies undertaken since the program was conceived—had neared completion. Of five analyses, three were in book form, two were about ready for the press—each of them a distinct

Even if national park values were not in jeopardy, even if a tramway on the face of Rainier would "alter but not destroy" the beauty of this magnificent mountain, there are certain undeniable statistics which militate against the success of this project. Weather records show a heavy preponderance of stormy winter days at Paradise, which could make operation unprofitable.

A tramway would deposit skiers far up on the flank of Rainier. Sudden storms and avalanches at that elevation would subject hundreds of people to considerable risk. This exposure to danger seems uncalled for when there is an area on the east side of Rainier known as Corral Pass which has better weather and excellent ski terrain.

The Automobile Club of Washington has said that its first goal will be "revision of the policies that govern all national parks." For our part, we will work just as hard to defend our parks from the unseemly disfigurement that attends much of man's unrestrained "modernization" of nature.

(Continued from page 5)

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contribution to knowledge of resource problems. Some of these books are now in the Sierra Club library, and were reviewed in the annual number of the *Bulletin*.

Of special interest to us is *Wildlife in Alaska* by A. Starker Leopold and F. Fraser Darling. Dr. Leopold is not only a director and a member of the Sierra Club Conservation Committee, but also a research associate of the Conservation Foundation.

### About Bequests

A number of members of the Sierra Club, and attorneys representing members, have informed the club that it is named as beneficiary in wills which have been drawn, to help in the work of preserving our scenic resources in accordance with its program.

The Sierra Club is a non-profit corporation, formed for "scientific, educational and literary" purposes, and bequests to the club are exempt from State and Federal inheritance taxes.



## Required Reading

You mustn't miss these, even if you've been away from your mailbox or magazine rack in recent months:

*The National Geographic Magazine* for June had a fascinating map of California, and a number of pieces on touring the state, but Sierrans will especially enjoy David R. Brower's article on one of the club's high trips. There were sensational reproductions of photographs of the mountain country, largely by our own members.

The Spring issue of *The Living Wilderness*, published by the Wilderness Society in Washington, D.C., was almost entirely devoted to a full report, with many photographs, of Justice William O. Douglas's celebrated 189-mile trek to save the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal wilderness. This classic event in conservation history was described in a classic report by Jack Durham, public relations specialist who handled the arrangements for "The C & O Canal Hike."

And our friend Bernard DeVoto was at his devastating best in a special article in the August *Harper's Magazine* on an alarming trend in Washington. The title: "Conservation: Down and On the Way Out."

## Natural Area in Use

The U.S. Forest Service last November set aside the White Mountain Natural Area, east of Bishop, at 9,900 to 11,400 feet elevation, to protect a selected stand of bristlecone pines. In a recent issue of the magazine *Science*, Dr. Edman Schulman of the California Institute of Technology reported on studies which already begin to justify the preservation of such an area for scientific purposes.

Dr. Schulman has been conducting tree-ring calendar research, and his article tells of a core sample from one of the bristlecone pines that had a count of 1,419 rings. It is his opinion that living trees more than 2,000 years old are likely to be found within the natural area. He hopes to substantiate this in the near future, in order to extend his tree-ring calendar studies of the recurrence of climatic cycles.

## Almanac

THE MONO WIND is blowing, quietly now since it is still August, but enough to give a taste of autumn, a dry wind from the desert that is a sign that summer is nearly over. Tuolumne's 80 days of growth and exuberant living have ended. Already the meadows are browning, the grasses in flower. The heads of the shorthair reedgrass (*Calamagrostis breweri*) hang as a red mist above the meadows, and in the boggy hollows the frost has turned the swamp onion leaves to gold.

Tuolumne burns its candles at both ends. In the short space of summer between the melting of spring snows in June and the frosting of September nights, Nature makes the most of warm days and reeks with fertility. In time there are fawns in the meadows and nests in the trees and a thousand voices from the forest. Mosquitoes thrive in a frenzy for blood like pagan Aztec priests with their sacrifices. Mount Dana's alpine slopes suddenly break out into flower. Among the somber frost-split rocks little pincushion plants with deep taproots send out their perennial blooms as they have done for decades, *Draba* and *Phlox* and on top the sky pilot, all thriving in fierce winds and intense sunlight. Even the old marmot, who sleeps nine months of the year and is drowsy the other three, comes out to sun on the rocks, his fat flesh rolling as he moves. The cony cures his hay, working feverishly between flights of the hawk to gather those succulent leaves up on the cliff, as though those around him were not good enough.

Now in late August comes the Mono wind, a gentle voice that says to make haste, winter is coming. With it come the gentians in the meadows, having harvested all of summer's blue sky and distilled it into the petals. Nature brings out gentians when you think everything is finished, as though to lead you to expect more. Gentians are the bouquets presented for a good performance . . .

WILLIAM L. NEELY,  
Ranger Naturalist, in *Yosemite  
Nature Notes*, September 1953

## *Along Many Trails*

**T**HE BOY SCOUTS of America, responding to a request by President Eisenhower, have been engaged this year in an active conservation program. An important part of their National Conservation Good Turn is an emphasis on good outdoor manners, illustrated in the "Outdoor Code" which is reproduced here. Its four points are the subject of a television station-break film distributed by the U.S. Forest Serv-

ice. The National Park Service and many other conservation agencies and park departments have publicized the code.

Believing that youth holds the destiny of our efforts to preserve the nation's scenic and wildlife heritage, we applaud the National Conservation Good Turn and urge Sierrans to give every encouragement to the Boy Scouts' work in conservation education.



As an American, I will do my best to:

### **BE CLEAN IN MY OUTDOOR MANNERS**

I will treat the outdoors as a heritage to be improved for our greater enjoyment. I will keep my trash and garbage out of America's waters, fields, woods, and roadways.

### **BE CAREFUL WITH FIRE**

I will prevent wild fire. I will build my fire in a safe place, and be sure it is out before I leave.

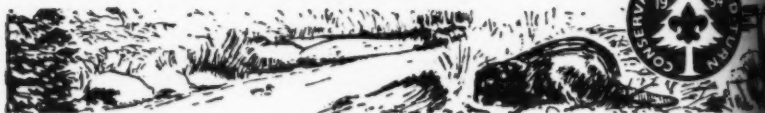
### **BE CONSIDERATE IN THE OUTDOORS**

I will treat public and private property with respect. I will remember that use of the outdoors is a privilege I can lose by abuse.

### **BE CONSERVATION-MINDED**

I will learn how to practice good conservation of soil, waters, forests, minerals, grasslands, and wildlife; and I will urge others to do the same. I will use sportsmanlike methods in all my outdoor activities.

## **BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA**





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